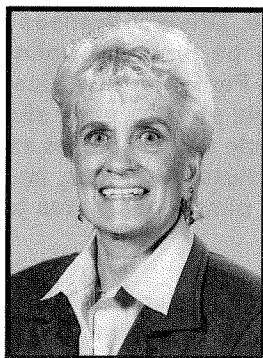


Hammerstrom's

for the people
in the 17th Senate District

Hotline



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SENATE WORKS TO HELP CONSUMERS RECOVER FROM IDENTITY THEFT. The Senate recently introduced a package of bills aimed at making it easier for identity-theft victims to restore their good credit histories as well as giving prosecutors and police agencies the power to open criminal investigations and bring cases in the jurisdiction where the crime was committed. According to statistics from the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), identity theft is one of the fastest growing crimes in the United States. Identity theft occurs when someone uses your personal information such as your name, Social Security or credit card number, or other identifying information, without your permission to open fraudulent bank or credit card accounts or commit other crimes. For more information about identity theft, including ways to reduce the risk of becoming a victim, please visit the FTC website at www.consumer.gov/idtheft.

DID YOU KNOW? In 2002, more than 160,000 people—4,640 in Michigan—reported identity theft instances to the Federal Trade Commission. On average, victims spent close to \$1,000 and more than 100 hours to restore their credit.

MICHIGAN SENATE MOVES TO CREATE JOBS. The proposal, "Fighting for Every Michigan Job," will help create manufacturing jobs, spur new small-business investment for more job opportunities, and provide incentives to expand the state's slow-moving economy by getting Michigan residents back to work. Many of the proposals in the package are a result of hearings held by the Senate and House Joint Committee on Business Competitiveness. The Committee traveled around the state to hear testimony from hundreds of individuals and job providers on how to make Michigan more competitive for jobs. One of the main components of the package focuses on the state's ailing tool and die industry, which has been especially hard hit with job losses due to overseas competition. Creation of Tool & Die Recovery Zones would provide the same tax relief of Renaissance Zones. The package of bills also includes an initiative which focuses on strengthening Michigan's timber industry.

EARLY DRIVER'S LICENSE AND PLATE RENEWALS. To avoid late fees, Michigan residents heading south this winter should remember to renew their license plates and drivers' licenses before they leave. Drivers' licenses and license plates can be renewed up to six months prior to expiration. License plates may be renewed online at www.Michigan.gov/sos, up to 45 days before they expire. To renew online, look for the Personal Identification Number printed on the renewal notice. Residents who wish to renew their license plates six months early should do so at their local Secretary of State branch office. Those that can be renewed early include vehicle plates expiring on the owner's birthday, including leased vehicles, all pick-up trucks and vans, regardless of weight, and all trailers and trailer coaches. The law does not allow motorcycle plates or company-owned passenger plates to be renewed early.

NOVEMBER DECLARED MICHIGAN VENISON MONTH. The Michigan Legislature has declared November Michigan Venison Month in recognition of the important role venison plays in Michigan's economy and culture. The celebration coincides with Michigan's firearm deer season, which begins November 15 and runs through the end of the month. Each season, more than 700,000 hunters spend more than ten million combined days in the field attempting to tag a deer and fill their freezers with venison. Michigan hunters were successful in harvesting more than 476,000 deer during the 2002 hunting season. In addition, Michigan has approximately 735 privately-owned deer and elk farms across the state, with more than 28,000 head of livestock. This ranks the state near the top for privately-owned deer and elk herds in the United States.